

Remarks

The Office Action mailed December 14, 2006 has been carefully reviewed and the foregoing amendment and following remarks have been made in consequence thereof.

Claims 1-23 are pending in this application. Claims 1-4, 7-13, 16-18, and 21-23 stand rejected. Claims 5, 6, 14, 15, 19, 20, and 23 are objected to.

In accordance with 37 C.F.R. 1.136(a), a one month extension of time is submitted herewith to extend the due date of the response to the Office Action dated December 14, 2005, for the above-identified patent application from March 14, 2006, through and including April 14, 2006. In accordance with 37 C.F.R. 1.17(a)(1), authorization to charge a deposit account in the amount of \$120.00 to cover this extension of time request also is submitted herewith.

The objection to Claim 23 is respectfully traversed. More specifically, Claim 23 has been amended to recite "a generator". Accordingly, Applicants request the objection to Claim 23 be withdrawn.

The rejection of Claims 7, 16, and 21 under 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph, is respectfully traversed. For example, Claims 7, 16, and 21 have each been amended to include that a first position encoder is positioned adjacent a transport member and a second position encoder is positioned adjacent an article. Accordingly, Applicants submit that Claims 7, 16, and 21 satisfy the requirements of Section 112, second paragraph. For at least the reasons set forth above, Applicants request the Section 112 rejection of Claims 7, 16, and 21 be withdrawn.

The rejection of Claims 1 and 8-10 under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by G.B. Patent No. 1,554,721 (Brown) is respectfully traversed.

Claim 1 recites an inspection system comprising "at least two base members, said base members spaced apart from each other...a support arm mounted to each said base member...a linear track extending between and supported by said support arms, said track comprising a first side and a second side...a transport member coupled to said linear track,

said transport member movable along said linear track...a transducer support arm pivotably coupled to said transport member...and a transducer assembly coupled to said transducer support arm, wherein said transducer assembly comprises an attachment member coupled at a first end to said transducer support arm and a support wheel coupled to a second end of said attachment member.”

Brown does not describe nor suggest an inspection system as recited in Claim 1. For example, Brown does not describe nor suggest an inspection system including a transducer assembly including an attachment member coupled at a first end to a transducer support arm and a support wheel coupled to a second end of the attachment member. Accordingly, and for at least this reason, Claim 1 is submitted as patentable over Brown.

Claim 8 recites an inspection system for inspecting metal articles, wherein the inspection system comprises “a base member...a support arm mounted to said base member...an elongate linear track mounted to said support arm, said track comprising a first side and a second side, wherein a length of said track extends generally perpendicularly to said support arm...a transport member coupled to said linear track, said transport member movable along said linear track...a transducer support arm pivotably coupled to said transport member...and a transducer assembly coupled to said transducer support arm.”

Brown does not describe nor suggest an inspection system as recited in Claim 8. For example, Brown does not describe nor suggest an inspection system including a base member, a support arm mounted to the base member, and an elongate linear track mounted to the support arm, wherein a length of the track extends generally perpendicularly to the support arm. Rather, Brown describes a supporting column 7 that is movable along rails 69, 70 that are each mounted on unlabeled portions of a base 1, wherein a length of the rails 69, 70 extends generally parallel to the unlabeled portions of the base 1. Accordingly, and for at least this reason, Claim 1 is submitted as patentable over Brown.

Claims 9 and 10 depend from independent Claim 8. When the recitations of Claims 9 and 10 are considered in combination with the recitations of Claim 8, Applicants submit that dependent Claims 9 and 10 likewise are patentable over Brown.

For the reasons set forth above, Applicants respectfully request that the Section 102 rejection of Claims 1 and 8-10 be withdrawn.

The rejection of Claims 2-4, 7, 11-13, 16-18, and 21-23 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Brown in view of U.S. Patent No. 5,710,378 (Dykes) is respectfully traversed.

Claims 2-4 and 7 depend from Claim 1, which is recited above. No combination of Brown and Dykes describes or suggests an inspection system as recited in Claim 1. For example, as described above, Brown does not describe nor suggest an inspection system including a transducer assembly including an attachment member coupled at a first end to a transducer support arm and a support wheel coupled to a second end of the attachment member. Dykes does not make up for the deficiencies of Brown. Because Brown and Dykes fail to individually teach or suggest one or more elements of Claim 1, it follows that a combination of Brown and Dykes cannot teach or suggest such element(s). As such, and for at least this reason, Claim 1 is submitted as patentable over Brown in view of Dykes.

Claims 2-4 and 7 depend from independent Claim 1. When the recitations of Claims 2-4 and 7 are considered in combination with the recitations of Claim 1, Applicants submit that dependent Claims 2-4 and 7 likewise are patentable over Brown in view of Dykes.

Claims 11-13 and 16 depend from Claim 8, which is recited above. No combination of Brown and Dykes describes or suggests an inspection system as recited in Claim 8. For example, as described above, Brown does not describe nor suggest an inspection system including a base member, a support arm mounted to the base member, and an elongate linear track mounted to the support arm, wherein a length of the track extends generally perpendicularly to the support arm. Dykes does not make up for the deficiencies of Brown. Because Brown and Dykes fail to individually teach or suggest one or more elements of Claim 8, it follows that a combination of Brown and Dykes cannot teach or suggest such element(s). As such, and for at least this reason, Claim 8 is submitted as patentable over Brown in view of Dykes.

Claims 11-13 and 16 depend from independent Claim 8. When the recitations of Claims 11-13 and 16 are considered in combination with the recitations of Claim 8,

Applicants submit that dependent Claims 11-13 and 16 likewise are patentable over Brown in view of Dykes.

Claim 17 recites a method of inspecting a metal article, wherein the method includes “positioning an inspection apparatus adjacent the metal article...and inspecting the metal article utilizing the ultrasonic inspection apparatus...the inspection apparatus comprising...at least two base members, the base members spaced apart from each other...a support arm pivotally mounted to each base member such that the support arms are each be pivotable relative to the corresponding base member...a linear track extending between and supported by the support arms, the track comprising a first side and a second side...a transport member coupled to the linear track, the transport member movable along the linear track...a transducer support arm pivotally coupled to the transport member...and a transducer assembly coupled to the transducer support arm.”

No combination of Brown and Dykes describes or suggests a method as recited in Claim 17. For example, neither Brown nor Dykes, considered alone or in combination, describes or suggests a method including positioning an inspection apparatus adjacent the metal article, and inspecting the metal article utilizing the ultrasonic inspection apparatus, wherein the inspection apparatus includes at least two base members, and a support arm pivotally mounted to each base member such that the support arms are each be pivotable relative to the corresponding base member. Because Brown and Dykes fail to individually teach or suggest one or more elements of Claim 17, it follows that a combination of Brown and Dykes cannot teach or suggest such element(s). As such, and for at least this reason, Claim 17 is submitted as patentable over Brown in view of Dykes.

Claims 18 and 21-23 depend from independent Claim 17. When the recitations of Claims 18 and 21-23 are considered in combination with the recitations of Claim 17, Applicants submit that dependent Claims 18 and 21-23 likewise are patentable over Brown in view of Dykes.

For the reasons set forth above, Applicants respectfully request that the Section 103 rejection of Claims 2-4, 7, 11-13, 16-18, and 21-23 be withdrawn.


Claims 5 and 6 were indicated in the Office Action as being allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims. Claims 5 and 6 depend from independent Claim 1, which is submitted to be in condition for allowance. When the recitations of Claims 5 and 6 are considered in combination with the recitations of Claim 1, Applicant submits that dependent Claims 5 and 6 likewise are in condition for allowance.

Claims 14 and 15 were indicated in the Office Action as being allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims. Claims 14 and 15 depend from independent Claim 8, which is submitted to be in condition for allowance. When the recitations of Claims 14 and 15 are considered in combination with the recitations of Claim 8, Applicant submits that dependent Claims 14 and 15 likewise are in condition for allowance.

Claims 19 and 20 were indicated in the Office Action as being allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims. Claims 19 and 20 depend from independent Claim 17, which is submitted to be in condition for allowance. When the recitations of Claims 19 and 20 are considered in combination with the recitations of Claim 17, Applicant submits that dependent Claims 19 and 20 likewise are in condition for allowance.

In view of the foregoing amendments and remarks, all the claims now active in this application are believed to be in condition for allowance. Reconsideration and favorable action is respectfully solicited.

Respectfully Submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'CHL', written over a horizontal line.

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